

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ILO - EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

REF: GENEVA 260

1. RESOLUTION COMMITTEE AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEES COMPLETED WORK ON JANUARY 22 TO ADOPT RESPECTIVE REPORTS WHICH WERE PRESENTED TO FINAL CONFERENCE PLENARY SESSION JANUARY 23.
2. RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED TWO RESOLUTIONS:
(A) ILO ACTION IN EUROPE AND (B) FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN EUROPE, WHICH REPLACED ALL OF ORIGINAL 12 RESOLUTIONS EXCEPT 4, 6 AND PART OF 2 WHICH WERE REFERRED TO TECHNICAL COMMITTEES AND 9 WHICH EMPLOYERS WITHDREW WHEN KEY ELEMENTS OF IT WERE INCORPORATED IN (B) ABOVE.
3. FINAL VERSION OF (A) REQUESTS EXPLICIT INCREASED ACTIVITY IN EUROPE REVOLVING AROUND MORE FREQUENT EUROPEAN CONFERENCES AND EXAMINATION OF THE ADVISABILITY OF CREATING A EUROPEAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE. SPECIFIC ACTION REQUESTS INCLUDE INQUIRIES AND IN-DEPT STUDIES INTO VARIOUS SOCIAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN EUROPE WITH RESPECT TO CONDITIONS OF LIFE AND WORK, TRADE UNION RIGHTS, MIGRANT WORKERS, ETC. ON BASIS THESE STUDIES, PROGRAMS WOULD BE DRAWN UP TO ACHIEVE WIDER EUROPEAN COOPERATION WITH RESPECT TO LABOR AND SOCIAL POLICY. DURING

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DISCUSSION SOVIET GOVT. MEMBER WANTED CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT

SHOULD BE POSSIBLE DRAW UP PROGRAMS REQUESTED EVEN BEFORE INQUIRIES AND STUDIES COMPLETED. WORKER VICE-CHAIRMAN STATED THAT WORKERS, IN SPIRIT OF CONCILIATION, SUPPORTED CONDITIONAL LANGUAGE CONCERNING EUROPEAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE, BUT THEY WANT GB TO ESTABLISH SUCH A COMMITTEE.

4. DURING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF (B), CONTROVERSY DEVELOPED OVER EXPLICIT RECOGNITION OF RIGHT TO STRIKE. EMPLOYERS PROPOSED INCLUSION RIGHT OF LOCKOUT. RESULT WAS REDRAFTING OF LANGUAGE TO IDENTIFY RIGHT TO STRIKE WITH 1970 CONFERENCE RESOLUTION WHICH CALLED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH ON THAT ISSUE IN INTEREST OF ENSURING FULL RESPECT FOR TRADE UNION RIGHTS. LANGUAGE OF FIRST MERGED DRAFT WHICH REPLACED GREECE, PORTUGAL, SPAIN, READ, "NOTING THE INADEQUATE PROTECTION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES, DUE TO DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE, NATIONAL ORIGIN, POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS OPINION OR TRADE UNION AFFILIATION," WAS CHANGED IN FINAL VERSION TO READ, "DEEPLY REGRETTING THAT THE STANDARDS WITH REGARD TO FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS ARE NOT RESPECTED IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES ON ESSENTIAL POINTS;". LATTER VERSION*WAS CONTRIBUTED BY SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS WHO HAD BEEN DELEGATED TO REDRAFT ORIGINAL MERGED VERSION.

5. COMMITTEE ON INCOME SECURITY TOOK NOTE THAT BEST INCOME GUARANTEE IS FULL EMPLOYMENT AND THAT SOCIAL GUARANTEES ARE BASED ON ECONOMIC GUARANTEES. COMMITTEE CONSIDERED ILO SHOULD CONTINUE CONCERN ITSELF WITH FULL EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME SECURITY. WORKER MEMBERS SUGGESTED THAT REVISION OF CONVENTION 44 ON UNEMPLOYMENT BE PLACED ON AGENDA OF 1976 ILO CONFERENCE, BUT EMPLOYERS MEMBERS EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT THAT IDEA. REPORT NOTED THAT THERE IS NO UNEMPLOYMENT IN COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE. ECONOMIC PLANNING IN THOSE COUNTRIES ASSURES EMPLOYMENT SECURITY AND HAS OBIATED NECESSITY FOR SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES WHICH GRANT BENEFITS DURING INVOLUNTARY UNEMPLOYMENT. COMMITTEE DISCUSSED AND ADOPTED RESOLUTION ON RIGHTS OF WORKERS IN CASE OF BANKRUPTCY.

6. COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT CONCERNED ITSELF WITH THE CUSTOMARY ISSUES OF WORK FLEXIBILITY, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT, WOMEN-OLDER-AND MIGRANT WORKERS AND, IN RECOGNITION OF CURRENT, MOST UNCLASSIFIED

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IMPORTANT FACTORY AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT IN INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES, DEVOTED PART OF THEIR DISCUSSION TO THE ENERGY CRISIS. THE WORKERS MEMBERS EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN AND PROPOSED A NUMBER OF MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE HARDSHIPS THAT WORKERS MIGHT HAVE TO BEAR BECAUSE OF THE CRISIS. A GOVT MEMBER INDICATED THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO FORESEE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ENERGY CRISIS, AND AN EMPLOYERS MEMBER AGREED THAT REPERCUSSIONS WERE DIFFICULT TO PREDICT, BUT PERSONALLY THOUGHT THAT THE ENERGY CRISIS WOULD

BE OVERCOME IN THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS AS A RESULT OF TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS. EASTERN EUROPEANS REPORTED THE USUAL, THERE ARE NO UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS IN THEIR COUNTRIES. IN ADDITION THEY INDICATED THAT THEY WERE NOT DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH THE TYPES OF MIGRATION PROBLEMS DISCUSSED IN THE COMMITTEE. UNFORTUNATELY NO ONE RAISED THE PROBLEM OF MIGRATION OUT OF EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THE COMMITTEE HAD BEFORE IT RESOLUTION CONCERNING TEMPORARY WORK AGENCIES AND RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING ACTION BY THE ILO TO GUARANTEE LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT, RESPECT OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS AND THE PROTECTION OF MIGRANT WORKERS. THE COMMITTEE DECIDED TO INCORPORATE ALL OR PART OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THESE RESOLUTIONS IN ITS REPORT.

7. COMMENT. SUCCESSFUL SUBSTITUTION OF MORE BLAND PHRASING IN PLACE OF "GREECE, PORTUGAL AND SPAIN" IN THE FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION WAS A WORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENT. IT REFLECTED IN PART ICFTU DESIRE TO ENSURE ADOPTION AND THE DEFT HANDLING OF THE SITUATION BY SECRETARIAT STAFF WHO DRAFTED THE FINAL VERSION. UNFORTUNATELY, EQUALLY WORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS DID NOT EMERGE FROM TECHNICAL COMMITTEES. IN THE INCOME SECURITY COMMITTEE WESTERN DELEGATES WERE LULLED INTO ADOPTING A REPORT WHICH INCORPORATED SOVIET BLOC CLAIMS CONCERNING UNEMPLOYMENT, NOT AS ASSERTIONS MADE BY EE DELEGATES, BUT AS OBSERVATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE. NON-COMMUNIST DELEGATES FAILED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SOVIET BLOC'S ANXIETY TO PRESERVE AT ALL COSTS "UNITED FRONT" CHARACTER OF CONFERENCE AND TO CHALLENGE MOST OBVIOUS AND SELF-SERVING CLAIMS BY EE'S OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PERFECTION.BASSIN

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